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S E C R E T BRATISLAVA 001041

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/PRA (CORDOVA), EUR/SCE (KABUMOTO), NEA/ENA
(BUTLER), VC (ELLIOT)
OSD FOR KELLEY
NSC FOR TEPPER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2014

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PINR](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE REQUEST: POSSIBLE SLOVAK TANK SALE TO
AZERBAIJAN

Classified By: DCM Scott Thayer for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

1. (S) Summary: This is an action request--see para 3. A Slovak firm proposes selling excess T-72 tanks to Azerbaijan. End Summary.

2. (S) Peter Peniaska, head of the Slovak arms firm Petina International, met with emboffs to seek USG opinion on the potential sale of 145 T-72 tanks to Azerbaijan. Petina is acting as an intermediary to assist the GOS dispose of its stockpiled or surplus materiel. Petina told emboffs the MOD closed the tender for the potential marketing of T-72 tanks to Azerbaijan in early November. The competition is between two firms: Peter Peniaska's Petina International and Roman Ondrus' Armimex. Peniaska said Armimex is essentially a one-man company which appears to be a front company for Russian or Armenian interests. (NOTE: Neither Armimex nor Ondrus are listed in the official Slovak business registry. Petina International is officially approved to engage in weapons sales.) Petina has offered to pay the Slovak MOD 367 million Slovak crowns for 145 T-72 tanks, in order to serve as the intermediary for onward sale to the Azerbaijani MOD. Armimex offered 70 million Slovak crowns.

3. (S) ACTION REQUEST: Post requests guidance/information on USG views on such a sale. We will, in the meantime, engage MFA arms export officials to gauge their reaction to it. Post recalls that USG recently chose not to join UK in opposing a proposed Slovak sale of SU-25 ground-attack aircraft to Armenia on the grounds that Armenian air was offset by Azeri armor and wonders whether that would still be the case. (The UK and German embassies, in the end, conducted a joint demarche on that sale; chagrined MFA interlocutors told them the sale was a "political decision" made by EconMin Rusko.)
WEISER

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